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AFGHANISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Transporting Eggs Safely to Market

USAID road-building efforts improve businesses in Badakhshan Province



Photo: USAID/AIRP

Cartons of eggs stand in the front of Abdul Naser's market stall in Kishim, Badakhshan Province.

New enterprises springing up along a new USAID-built road are a sign of economic growth in Afghanistan.

Kishim has long been a stopover for truckers and passengers exhausted from trips on nearly impassable roads in northeastern Afghanistan. Long-haul and delivery trucks crowded each other and interfered with foot traffic. Clay and dust, stirred up by traffic, coated the merchandise.

However, that situation has improved since USAID extended a 103-kilometer road in Badakhshan Province through the tiny town of Kishim on its way to the provincial capital of Fayzabad. The new road design created roundabouts and set-backs that would funnel Kishim traffic along wide boulevards and provide access to markets, side roads, and parking areas.

Before road improvement could begin, the shops and traders that spilled into the existing roadway would have to move. "At first, I was worried," said Abdul Naser when he learned that his open stall was located inside the right-of-way. "I was on the first line."

Gradually, misgivings yielded to delight as USAID helped shopkeepers relocate to better and cleaner areas. Heavy trucks on their way through town no longer competed with pushcarts and pedestrians.

Abdul Naser was pleased. He reestablished his grocery stand in an excellent location on a street corner. His business improved. For the first time in recent memory, he was able to source enough eggs from Kabul to satisfy his customers.

Before the new road was built, the problem with getting eggs to market was that the eggs broke in transit because the old road was just too rough.

Today, Naser, at his new location, has lots of eggs. He stacks them at the front of his stand each day.

"Because of the new road, trucks come daily and they have fresh high-quality commodities," Naser said.

The revitalization of existing business where the new road intersects a local town is truly a sign of success.